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THE MARTYR NURSE.

THE
MARTYR NURSE

THE DEATH
AND ACHIEVEMENT OF
EDITH CAVELL.

BY
DOUGLAS BLACKBURN,
WITH FOREWORD.

LONDON:
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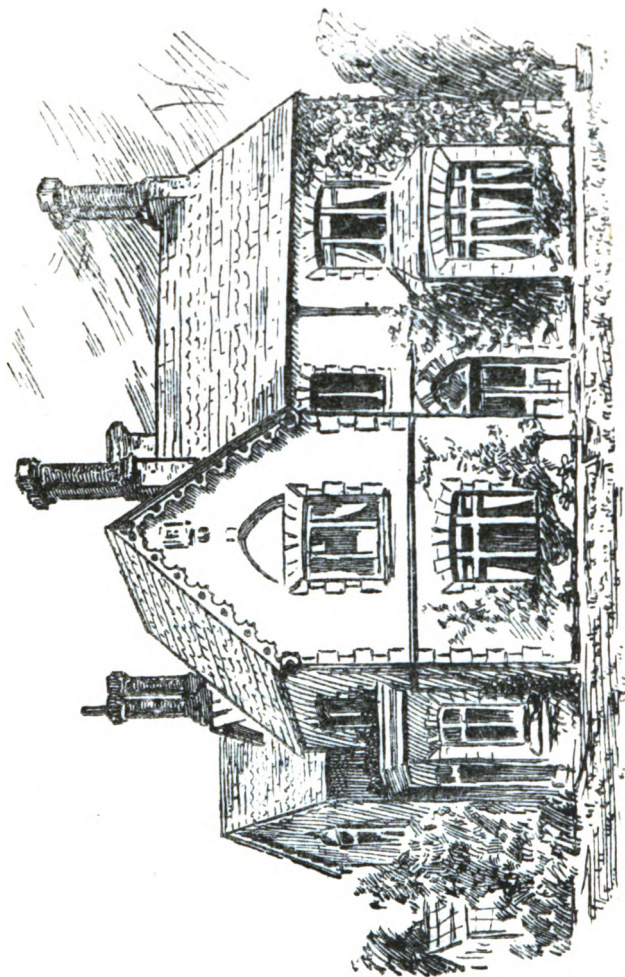
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THE VICARAGE.

THE MARTYR NURSE.

FOREWORD.

Despite the cynical assertions that this is an age of blatant advertisement, the gratifying fact remains that at no period in the history of human endeavour was there so much work and so many unobtrusive workers in the cause of suffering humanity as at present.

The Gospel of Altruism has been accepted for ages, but its practice has been restricted. Too often the Altruist has won notoriety rather than fame as an eccentric, or as an emotionalist. In either case, an unsympathetic or uncomprehending world has usually ascribed to vanity alone what they could not recognise or credit as unselfishness. Even to-day, when philanthropists are not always suspect, the self-sacrificing server of the Commonwealth receives but scanty acknowledgment of his disinterestedness, for the band of

believers in the existence of the virtue of unselfishness grows but slowly.

Fortunately, however, faith in the possibilities of good in our fellows is being stimulated by the fast-recurring stories of sacrifice that brighten the sanguinary record of the present sad travail of the nations.

Among them the story of the Martyrdom of Nurse Edith Cavell will do much to widen and enlarge that faith.

Her tragic fate will enforce the lesson of unselfishness because of its absolute freedom from any taint of that self-seeking which the sceptics pretend to find in the most transparently disinterested motives.

Edith Cavell was one of the great army of the silent, unadvertised, and unadvertising makers of happiness for others.

The seeker after material for her biography has to be content with what contented her—the bare knowledge that she worked for others; that her work was her life, and apart from it she had no existence.

One may search in vain for any mention of her name outside the narrow limits of official cognisance of her professional status. Her correspondence was strictly limited to the demands and requirements of her duties, and even in the few letters that are in the possession of friends the writer is ever effaced by her subject. Neither personally nor by proxy did she ask for any of those adventitious aids to public recognition that are so eagerly seized upon by the ambitious climber of the

steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar. Her work absorbed her to the exclusion almost of the ordinary ties and obligations that bind most people to the world outside their business sphere. The testimony of the few who knew her intimately, and the spirit of her utterances when face to face with eternity, support the presumption that life, apart from her work, had little interest for her; nor is it an extravagance to suggest that her unselfish soul would have been repelled, even by the pæans of praise that her name evokes to-day, in so far as the public interest was directed more upon her than upon her work and its objective.

The story of the beginnings of Edith Cavell would be commonplace but for the memories that surround them, of the impressions left at each stage of her path towards the success that crowned her efforts.

She was the elder daughter of the Rev. Frederick Cavell, Rector of Swardeston, a dreamy, old-world village near Norwich. There she was born in 1875, and spent her girlhood. Her father was a man of firm yet kindly character, and those who knew him during his fifty years' occupancy of the Rectory say that Edith inherited from him many of his characteristics.

Among them was that high sense of duty and consideration for others which was unquestionably the prompting impulse that influenced her in her twenty-first year to select as her vocation in life that most trying of all services—devotion to the sick poor.

To ensure the best possible training, she entered her-

self as a probationer at the London Hospital, and we have the testimony of many of her instructors and contemporaries that she distinguished herself by a conspicuous assiduity, and from the first endeared herself to colleagues and patients alike by her unselfish devotion.

Later, as a consequence of the feeling excited by her execution, Queen Alexandra expressed her wish that the new Nurses' Home at this Hospital to which she had given her name should be called instead the "Edith Cavell" Home.

Her course of training being completed in 1896, she went to St. Pancras Infirmary as Night Superintendent, and stayed there over three years, when she became Assistant Matron at the Shoreditch Infirmary at Hoxton.

At both these institutions she came into hourly contact with suffering and poverty in its most acute and repellent form. Work among the very poor and in the slums of London is doubtless the greatest test of unselfishness that man or woman can undergo, and the fact that she not only spent so long a period in these trying surroundings, but brought to her work a devotion and energy that some of her colleagues considered superfluous, is the best proof that her heart was in it.

During ten strenuous years she performed her philanthropic duties, and voluntary charity, among the poor of Hoxton; then, on the strength of the reputation she had gained among the heads of her profession as an

expert in the difficult art of management and ruling, she was offered the position of Matron of a Surgical and Medical Hospital founded by Monsieur de Page at Brussels.

Apart from the congenial nature of the duties, she was doubtless attracted by the fact that part of her schooldays had been passed in the Belgian capital, and her acquaintance with the French language was not the least of her many qualifications for the post.

Many an abler woman would have found the task she had undertaken beyond her, for the position of an English woman and a Protestant in a post which prejudice and custom assigned to a member of a Roman Catholic religious sisterhood invited much opposition, open and passive. But the infinite tact and sweetness of disposition of Edith Cavell disarmed her opponents, and she lived down all enmity so successfully and completely that within an amazingly short period she was as popular with all she came in contact with as if she had been selected for possessing the most stringent qualifications demanded by those who had at first opposed her. Among her converts was a popular Belgian ecclesiastic whom she won over by her tact so completely that he became her ardent champion, and did much to kill the prejudice and actual animosity that at the beginning threatened to retard her work very gravely.

Five years before the war Miss Cavell had established a training-home for nurses, which proved so successful

that it attracted the attention of the authorities, and induced them to assist and encourage her usefulness by providing her with an admirable up-to-date building.

It is a well-recognised fact in the nursing profession that women possessed of all the best qualities that make for excellence as nurses pure and simple are proportionately more numerous than in perhaps any profession in which their sex engage. On the other hand, the number who manifest those attributes essential for a successful controller of other nurses is surprisingly small in proportion. It is said by competent observers that there is a marked propensity among intelligent trained nurses—however rigorously “routine” the discipline they may have been subject to—towards a certain individuality and impatience of control that unfits them for controlling others. It is, perhaps, the natural outcome of that independence of mind that comes with knowledge of, and belief in one’s own capacity. Directorship calls for a degree of self-effacement and putting oneself in the position of others that does not harmonise with strong individualism, for that is essentially self-assertive. There are thousands of highly-skilled nurses who are valued by medical men as almost certain aids to a successful issue in bad cases, yet are totally unfitted to be placed in authority over a nursing staff.

The concentration camps and hospitals of the Boer War supplied many cases in point. Ladies were given control solely on the strength of their undeniable

capacity as nurses, but with disastrous results. The art of ruling is as distinct as any other art, but much more rare.



DR. DE PAGE.

It was in this that Miss Cavell excelled and justified her selection as Directress by the Committee of the Belgian Hospitals. It was a position, having regard

to the then state of the art and science of nursing in Belgium, almost of pioneer also.

These institutions were the St. Gilles Hospital, the Ecole Belge, and the Hospital de Page. From the first week of the invasion of Belgium they were crowded with inmates.

The unique administrative capacity of Miss Cavell proved of inestimable value. She possessed that art of ensuring the loyal co-operation of subordinates that makes all the difference between an easy-running machine and one that clogs and jams at frequent intervals.

Miss Cavell offered her services within a week or two of the outbreak of war, and her marvellous organising power made itself felt immediately she began her work in Brussels, and her success was rapid. She started with three or four probationers, and within a few months had in 1914 a staff of over ninety working under her—not only the pick of English nurses, but of all nationalities, German included. The success of the nursing home was followed by the building of a surgical hospital opposite, and shortly afterwards another hospital containing 175 beds. The children's ward, designed by Miss Cavell, in blue and white, was a spot of beauty. There were twenty-two beds, chiefly for babies, and every evening Miss Cavell spent an hour with the children.

It is a difficult matter even in a well-ordered hospital in normal times to maintain freedom from friction.

Only those who have had opportunities for observing and comparing the work of various large-staffed institutions can fully realise the difficulties that beset the management. All such agree that no post calls for more tact and knowledge of human nature than that of Matron or Directress of a Hospital where a large staff of nurses is engaged. The conflict of duties and interests is extraordinary to those who do not understand that no two medical men employ exactly the same system with regard to their patients and assistants, and legitimate grounds for clashing and misunderstanding may occur a dozen times a day.

If such be the case in time of peace, it needs no stretch of imagination to form some conception of the confusion likely to prevail during the rush and excitement inseparable from a period of war panic. But through all this Miss Cavell steered her course with cool head and steady hand. The authoritative tributes to her efficient management of the institutions under her charge are alone sufficient to ensure for her fame as one of the greatest of War Hospital Directresses.

Among the many tributes to her character and general competency, one by Miss Burt, who worked under her in Brussels, gives a vivid and comprehensive insight. "Miss Cavell," says this witness, "from the time I first met her to the time we last parted, spent every minute of her life in doing good for other people." She describes her as a magnificent organiser, full of

boundless energy. Her strong personality and tireless efforts in the interest of suffering humanity made all who met her love her.

She was known even in Germany for her skill in training nurses and her natural gift for easing suffering. Nurses of all nationalities, including Germans, went to be trained under her. In addition to her exhausting duties at the hospital, she was an industrious lecturer and instructress, giving six lectures weekly, four to the medical men and two to the nurses, on various phases of nursing. Although her private staff of nurses was paid by the better-class Belgians, the call of the poor never came in vain, her help always being forthcoming.

She took a personal interest in her cases, and in that lay her undoing.

But we know enough of her indomitable character to be aware that even the consciousness that she was imperilling her own life would not have deterred her from following what she sincerely believed to be the dictates of humanity. That she assisted more than one Belgian soldier to escape the terror of the German occupation she herself admitted at her trial. It saddens us, therefore, to reflect that the gratitude her kindness inspired prompted the recipients on their arrival in a place of safety to acknowledge it in letters of thanks that were probably intercepted by the German authorities, and provided them with the fatal evidence that secured her conviction.

With a catholicity that is the hall-mark of the humanitarian all the world over, Miss Cavell made no distinction between the subjects of her kindness. The German wounded benefited by her ministrations equally with the Belgian and her own countryman. But that fact weighed not a feather in the balance when her conduct became the subject of trial. The escape of one sick Belgian through her charity was a crime that offset, in the opinion of her judges, the succour rendered by her to a hundred wounded German soldiers.

W. S. M. KNIGHT.



CHAPTER I.

THE ACCUSATION.

There is reason to believe that the German authorities in Brussels had, for some time, had under observation a number of persons suspected of aiding British and French soldiers, lost in Belgium, to escape over the border into Holland. The Military Prosecutor at the trial boldly asserted that a widespread conspiracy for this purpose existed, having as its head Prince Reginald de Croy of Belignies, and that his chief assistant was Miss Cavell. The plot, it was alleged, consisted in smuggling over soldiers found wandering, mainly in

the Province of Hainault. With the assistance of the Countess de Belleville, such stragglers were taken, by easy stages, to the Hospital presided over by Miss Cavell, and from time to time passed over the Dutch frontier as opportunity offered.

At the trial at which Miss Cavell was sentenced, thirty-six other accused shared the indictment, among them being the Princess Marie de Croy, the Countess de Belleville, and Mademoiselle Thulier. The Princess was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and the other two to death; but the Countess and Mlle. Thulier were pardoned by the Kaiser. Fortunately, the Prince de Croy could not be found.



CHAPTER II.

PRINCESS MARIE DE CROY.

The stories and even the identities of the brave colleagues of Miss Cavell are likely to be lost sight of in the secrecy that has purposely enshrouded their fate. The Princess Marie de Croy, still a very young woman, boldly risked her life and liberty in securing both, for the soldiers who had the good fortune to share in the ministrations of the Band of Mercy of which she was a zealous and useful member. The Princess was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, with hard labour, a

cruel fate from which, it is satisfactory to think, the final victory of the Allies will release her. The following interesting sketch of the Princess is supplied by the "Daily Express":—

"The Princess belongs to a family which traces its descent from the ancient Royal house of Hungary, and among her ancestresses was Mary Queen of Scots. The present head of the family, the Duke of Croy-Dülmen, in spite of his French title, has his seat in Westphalia, and is a Prince of the German Empire. A near relative is the Archduchess Isabella, wife of the Archduke Frederick of Austria.

"The Princess is the sister—not the wife—of Prince Reginald of Croy, and of Prince Leopold of Croy-Soire, an officer in the Belgian army attached to the headquarters of the British Division. At the outbreak of the war the Princess was living with her family at the Château de Bellignies, their beautiful home between Maubeuge and Valenciennes, on the frontier of France and Belgium, and at one of the gateways, so to speak, through which the German hordes poured on their way to Paris last autumn."

An English gentleman, in close relation with the family, informed the writer of these particulars that the Princess, who is a singularly noble, self-sacrificing young lady, and very delicate, had established a Red Cross hospital in her château, where she nursed and tended the British wounded on the retreat from Mons. When the Germans entered France she made no dis-

crimination in her work of humanity. German wounded also were received at the château.

By her courage and dignity she managed for more than a year to keep both the French and Germans in the neighbourhood quiet, and to preserve the immediate district from the horrors which too often follow an enemy occupation. Though her home had been arranged as a hospital, German generals, officers, and men were, nevertheless, billeted in it.

Lost British and French soldiers forced upon her the necessity of betraying and delivering them up or of aiding them to escape death and capture. The Princess never hesitated for a moment. She is half English, and her English grandmother, a very old lady, died at the château, after the arrest of the Princess, from illness brought on by shock.

At the trial in Brussels, says our informant, while all the accused held themselves with dignity and courage, it was patent to the Court that the young Princess Marie de Croy sought to take the blame for all on herself.

“She has the qualities,” he adds, “of which martyrs are made, and if the German Emperor chooses to make a martyr of her, there is history to record her fate.

“She only confers honour on the great house to which she belongs, and her imprisonment is a cold-blooded, calculated, cruel deed, destined to create a precedent for many more of the sort if the soldiers of Great Britain, France, and Belgium permit it, and forget that it was

for their soldier-comrades that Miss Cavell lost her life, the Comtesse de Belleville and others were condemned to death, and the Princess Marie and others to long and degrading terms of imprisonment."

CHAPTER III. THE SYSTEM.

According to the statement of the prosecution, which may be accepted, since most of the accused made no attempt to traverse it, the arrangements for carrying out the system of smuggling the soldiers was perfect. A band of guides and couriers was engaged to conduct the fugitives from point to point in their passage to Holland. The Countess de Belleville, assisted by a French Abbé, was the principal agent. The Abbé escaped arrest, and at the trial the Countess asserted that, though she was in the habit of meeting him at a café, it was on her own private affairs. The part taken by Miss Cavell seems to have been that of directress of the temporary rest-house which the fugitives had provided for them at the Hospital. Her chief assistant was Philip Bancq, a Belgian architect, an earnest patriot, who declared at the trial that he was quite prepared to sacrifice himself in the cause of his countrymen. His devotion to his sense of duty exacted that sacrifice, for he was condemned and shot.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARREST AND PREPARATIONS
FOR DEFENCE.

Although Miss Cavell was arrested on August 5th, it was not until the last day of August that news was received at the American Legation in Brussels.

The interests of British residents in Belgium being looked after by the American Legation, the Minister, Mr. Brand Whitlock, immediately took action. He wrote to Baron Von der Lancken, of the Political Division of the Governor-General of Belgium, asking for information, and for permission to confer with Miss Cavell, in order to make arrangements for her defence. Ten days passed without a reply to this letter, when the request was repeated. Two days more elapsed before Baron Von der Lancken sent a reply, to the effect that Miss Cavell was in the military prison of St. Gilles, that her defence was in the hands of Advocate Braun, and he added certain particulars. Miss Cavell, he said, had confessed to having hidden in her dwelling English and French soldiers, as well as Belgians of an age to carry arms, all of them eager to get to the Front. Further, that she had confessed to having furnished these soldiers with the money necessary for making the journey to France, and to having

facilitated their getting out of Belgium by procuring guides for them, who made it possible to cross the frontier clandestinely.

Meanwhile, the friends of Miss Cavell in Belgium were doing all in their power to arrange for her defence. In this work they were loyally assisted by the officers of the American Legation.

Of these, none worked harder than Mr. Hugh Gibson, the Secretary to the Legation. He has a wide reputation in diplomatic circles as a man of vast energy and resolution. He had already done great things for the unfortunate victims of the German occupation who came under the protective wing of the American Legation, and will be remembered for the skill and pertinacity he had displayed some months previously on behalf of a party of English nurses stranded in Belgium, whose release and return to England were the result of his efforts. Although one of the youngest members of the American diplomatic service, Mr. Gibson has had great and novel experience in many countries. He is known as the "Stormy Petrel," for his activities on behalf of his country have always been on occasions of stress and storm. He had succeeded in carrying through most intricate affairs of State, involving infinite tact and knowledge of men and things, and always was most successful when the odds seemed greatest against him.

When the friends of Miss Cavell learned that the all-conquering young Secretary had thrown himself into

the cause of the victim of German officialism they were satisfied that she had a doughty champion.

His first efforts were directed towards obtaining the release of Miss Cavell, pending the trial. But the refusal of the German authorities was so emphatic that even the man who did not usually take "No" for an answer had to cease his efforts in that direction. The next task was procuring proper legal representation for the accused. But under German military law a prisoner has not the right to engage a lawyer for his defence without the consent of the authorities. The services of Advocate Braun had been secured by the friends of Miss Cavell, but for reasons that are not very clear, in the absence of fuller particulars, he seems to have been either unwilling or unable to undertake the defence. He was interviewed by Mr. G. de Leval, the legal adviser to the American Legation, and to him explained his reason, adding that he had spoken to a friend, Advocate Kirschen, of the Belgian Bar, who was prepared to take up the defence.

But fresh difficulties intruded. The same unjust regulation which forbids an accused person the right of retaining a lawyer for his defence, prevents his having any communication with him should the authorities grant the questionable privilege of engaging him. Further, the almost inconceivable injustice of the rule is accentuated by the refusal of the authorities to allow either prisoner or his lawyer access to any document or evidence to be used at the trial.

A more outrageous inversion of the elementary principles of justice, as understood by Englishmen, cannot be imagined. The absurd system is a survival of the methods of the old Spanish Inquisition, under which a person was suddenly and secretly seized and kept in prison for an indeterminate period, ignorant of the offence he had committed, and a prey to that torturing fear and suspense that breaks down the strongest willed. When, at length, he was taken before his judges, he heard for the first time the nature of the charge against him. This had been prepared by experts, in a manner so diabolically ingenious as to be proof against the dialectical assaults of even the ablest lawyer.

There is nothing truer than the old legal axiom which declares that the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client. Conscious innocence, despite the story books, is not always its own defence. The fluent, plausible rogue is much more likely to meet an accusation with a convincing refutation, invented on the spur of the moment, than the truthful innocent, unfamiliar with the art of expression and the subtle, but potent, laws of evidence. Even had Miss Cavell been disposed to deny or qualify the charges against her she would have been unable to do so effectively, for the mere denial of a charge, however estimable the accused person, would hardly suffice to satisfy the judges. Evidence in corroboration of her assertions would naturally be demanded, and as she would most

probably be unprepared for that particular charge, the chances are that she would have been quite unable to produce the necessary combatting evidence at the time. No one is less able to appreciate the necessity for complete corroboration of his own assertion than the habitually honest and truthful. Never having made statements open to question, the need of proving them has not occurred. He is surprised that anyone should require proof, and, if pressed, generally leaves the strongest and best evidence to the last—if he produces it at all.

Under the conditions imposed by an arbitrary tribunal, the advocate who attempted the defence of Miss Cavell would have a task almost as difficult as that which would have presented itself to his client had she attempted her own defence. He would start with the tremendous handicap of not knowing till the very last moment the nature of the charge, and, more embarrassing still, he would be in complete ignorance of how much of it was true or capable of refutation. In short, the defence of a person under these impossible conditions would be a farce. All the defending advocate could do, if he were permitted, would be to throw discredit upon the witnesses by cross-examination.

But the chances against this were increased by the nature of the Court. It was strictly military—German military, where the methods of civil life are regarded as effete and childish, and the sole objective the maintenance of military dominance.

It is quite probable that Miss Cavell, with her quick intellect and acquaintance with German methods—which she had had ample means of observing since the German occupation—was fully alive to the fact that to be accused was to be condemned. It may be hoped that she was thus prepared for her fate, for certainty on this point would spare her much suffering. We are helped in this hope by the resignation and assurance conveyed in her words to the Chaplain: “I thank God for this ten weeks’ quiet before the end. . . . This time of rest has been a great mercy.” This is the utterance and expression not of carking care, but of Christian serenity.

From the moment of her arrest Miss Cavell became practically dead to her friends, for they never saw her again.

It was not until three weeks afterwards that they learned, through the American Legation, where she was confined.

Only one small ray of hope illumined the gloom. Mr. de Leval was informed by Advocate Kirschen that these military court proceedings were conducted very carefully. Though he would not have the opportunity of seeing Miss Cavell before the trial, to prepare her defence, he hoped to be able to gather, during the hearing, much that would be useful for that purpose, for the proceedings were certain to be protracted, as there were thirty-five prisoners. As the charge was identical he would be able to glean from the evidence

much that would be useful in his defence of his client. With that cold comfort the friends of Miss Cavell had perforce to be content.

The facts of the case were communicated to Mr. Page, the United States Ambassador in London, and he responded promptly, urging that every effort should be made to ensure for Miss Cavell a fair trial. But the gentlemen of the Legation in Brussels needed no spurring; they were neglecting no opportunity. We shall probably never know all that was done by them, but there is every reason to feel satisfied that the American character for thoroughness and "hustle" was well maintained.

Mr. de Leval made another attempt to gain access to Miss Cavell, and on being peremptorily refused, he announced to Mr. Kirschen his determination to be present at the trial, so as to watch the case. He was, however, reluctantly dissuaded from this intent by the Advocate, who pointed out that the presence of Mr. de Leval would most probably cause offence, and certainly prejudice, to the prisoner, as the German judges would resent it as implying a want of confidence in their impartiality. It would look, he said, as if Mr. de Leval were exercising a sort of supervision of the trial. Mr. Kirschen repeated his assurance that the proceedings of the German Military Court were always perfectly fair, and that no apprehensions need exist on that score.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRIAL.

Like all military trials, this was held in camera. Therefore, we are dependent for a record of the proceedings upon the very fragmentary accounts given by an official and one or two other persons who were present. The language of the Court being German, a French interpreter was provided for Miss Cavell, who was well acquainted with that tongue. There is no reason to doubt the statement of these authorities that Miss Cavell deprived herself of any chance she may have had by frankly admitting all the more serious counts in the indictment. It was true, she said, that she had assisted soldiers to cross the border into Holland, and had provided others with money for that purpose. On being asked why she had done this, she bravely replied that she understood that, if caught in Belgium, they would be shot, and she felt it her duty, as a patriot, to save them if she could.

The reply of the Official Prosecutor to this was that, however her argument might apply to the case of her own countrymen, it could not apply to French and Belgians, whom she had also succoured.

It is both consistent with the straightforward character of Miss Cavell, as well as illustrative of that strange incapacity of many otherwise acutely perceptive women, to recognise the full significance of their admissions that the most damning evidence against her

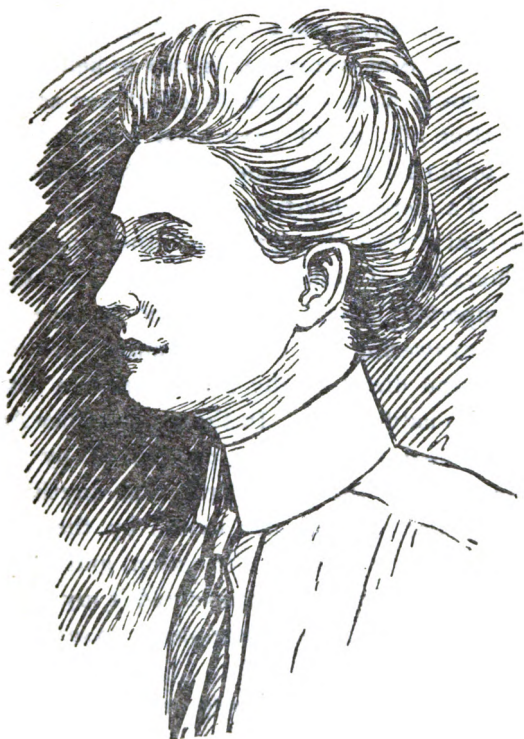
was supplied by Miss Cavell herself, and quite superfluously. Not content with admitting that she had assisted soldiers to escape, she volunteered the evidence that was needed to clench the offence and remove any doubt that her advocate might have inspired as to its weakness. She told the Court that many of the soldiers she had assisted to escape wrote thanking her after their arrival in England. It has been suggested that this evidence had been already obtained by the authorities by intercepting those letters, but if the evidence of a German present in Court is to be relied upon, it was Miss Cavell who provided this finishing touch. As Mr. de Leval emphasises the unfortunate nature of this admission, it may for once be safe to accept a German authority.

But, be this as it may, the evidence was quite sufficient, without this final embellishment, to have secured the conviction of any person on the grounds charged, for the wording of the section of the German military law under which Miss Cavell was prosecuted leaves no room for doubt as to the seriousness of her offence. Paragraph 58 of the German Military Code says:—

Will be sentenced to death for treason, any person who with the intention of helping the hostile Power or of causing harm to the German or allied troops, is guilty of one of the crimes of Paragraph 90 of the German Penal Code.

The case referred to in this paragraph consists in

“conducting soldiers to the enemy,” and the penalties set forth apply to foreigners as well as to Germans.



NURSE CAVELL.

There is just the possibility, as pointed out by Mr. de Leval, that had not Miss Cavell provided the evidence, it would not have been possible to prove

that her attempts to smuggle the soldiers over the border were successful, and she could only have been convicted of the attempt, and not the completion, of the act. But, knowing what we do of the robust honesty of this courageous woman, it is easy to believe that she herself would have scorned to effect her acquittal on what, after all, would have been a technicality. It counts to her for righteousness that she refused to avail herself of a mere subterfuge.

The trial of Miss Cavell and the other prisoners began on Thursday, October 7th. We are told that she comported herself with perfect courage and self-control, answering the questions put to her without a tremble, and direct to the point, with no attempt at evasion or qualification. In the words of her Advocate, she completed the case against herself by admitting all the charges, the only attempt at anything like a defence being put into her mouth by the prosecutor, who asked the reason for her action, and received the heroic reply, "Because I considered it my duty, in the interests of humanity and patriotism, to save these men from being shot, if I could."

No braver answer was surely ever given by a woman under the shadow of death.

The retort of the Prosecutor was an attempt to belittle and prove the futility of her action. "These men were in no danger from remaining in the country," he said.

Even if it be true, the fact that Miss Cavell believed

that they would be shot, and was prepared to risk her own life on her belief, glorifies her courage still more.

The trial was concluded on Friday, October 8th, and, following the custom of most military courts, the pronouncing of sentence was deferred. The Official Prosecutor had asked for the death sentence on Miss Cavell and eight others of the thirty-five; but, says the report of Mr. de Leval, the Court seemed to demur, hence, probably, the postponement.

We are told that Advocate Kirschen made a very good plea for his client, using all the arguments possible; but it must have been in the form of an appeal for mercy, for he was defending one who practically refused to be defended. From a legal point of view no defence was possible in the face of the damaging admissions of the accused, and that seems to have been the feeling of her friends at the American Legation.

In view of the fact that Miss Cavell admitted practically all the charges against her, if the assurance of her defending Advocate is to be accepted, it would perhaps be unjust to hold him in any degree responsible for the verdict on the ground of an incomplete or incompetent presentation of such facts as might have been adduced in her favour. But it is impossible to regard without grave suspicion the fact that he failed to acquaint the American Legation who had retained his services with either the progress of the trial or the result. More startling still, and pregnant with suggestion, is the circumstance that, although Mr. de

Leval made every effort to find him afterwards, he remained undiscovered.

It is now known that this Advocate was an Austrian by birth, but a naturalised Belgian.



CHAPTER VI.

THE FIGHT FOR HER LIFE.

And now began one of the most dramatic fights for the life of a condemned heroine ever carried on by the representatives of a Government.

It was only on the information of an outsider that Mr. de Leval learned on the following day that the trial had been concluded on the previous evening. It appears that Advocate Kirschen, for some not obvious reason, failed to acquaint the American Legation with the fact—an omission on which Mr. de Leval comments. That gentleman made immediate efforts to communicate with the Advocate, but was unable to find him. On Sunday he sent him a note, requesting him to furnish the Legation with his report on the case, or call there at 8.30 in the morning on Monday. Inquiries of others brought the information that sentence would probably not be pronounced for several days; and it

is to be feared that this baseless suggestion was officially inspired, for the subsequent proceedings exhibit a distinct effort on the part of the German authorities to conceal the fact that Miss Cavell was to be hurried to her death.

On Sunday evening Mr. de Leval called at the Political Division of the German Government, and saw Mr. Conrad, a German official, asking whether permission would be given to him to see Miss Cavell in prison. He pointed out that, the trial being over, no serious objection could be urged against so reasonable a request. He also asked for permission for Mr. Gahan, an English clergyman, to visit her.

The answer was the stereotyped official intimation that inquiry would be made at the Court for the required permission, and the result reported on in due course.

There is no room left for doubt that Mr. Conrad had no intention of carrying out his promises. An hour and a half after the death sentence had been pronounced by the Court, he assured both Mr. de Leval and Mr. Hugh Gibson that the sentence had not yet been announced. On the strength of that assurance, Mr. Whitlock wrote to the American Ambassador in London :

I hasten to send you word that her trial has been completed, and that the German Prosecutor has asked for sentence of death against her and eight other persons implicated by her testimony. Sen-

tence has not yet been pronounced, and I have some hope that the Court Martial may decline to pass the rigorous sentence proposed.

The ink was scarcely dry on that letter of hope before Mr. Whitlock learned that sentence of death had been pronounced.

During the whole of Monday the American Legation was anxiously awaiting the promised report from Mr. Conrad, but he made no sign. Both Mr. Gibson and Mr. de Leval called upon him, or telephoned, only to be met with the stereotyped "nothing fresh to report," varied by one message reporting official refusal to the request for a visit to Miss Cavell by Mr. Leval and the clergyman, Mr. Gahan.

Meanwhile, the non-appearance of Advocate Kirschen was puzzling Mr. de Leval. He had called at his house and office without result, and went on to the house of another lawyer who had defended one of the prisoners. He also was absent, but later in the afternoon he called upon Mr. de Leval, and reported that he had been informed by the German Commandatur that judgment would be pronounced on the following morning (Tuesday). He added that he feared the Court would be very severe.

At 8 o'clock that evening Mr. de Leval was privately but authoritatively informed that sentence had been pronounced at 5 o'clock that afternoon, and that Miss Cavell would be shot at 2 o'clock on Tuesday morning.

Mr. Whitlock was immediately informed, and ad-

dressed the following appeal to Baron von der Lancken :—

Your Excellency,—I have just learned that Miss Cavell, who was a British subject, and consequently under the protection of my Embassy, was this morning condemned to death by a sentence of Court-Martial.

Without going into the causes which led to such a severe sentence, and one which, if all reports which have reached me are correct, is more severe in this case than in all the others which have been tried by the same tribunal, I hope to be able to appeal to the sentiments of humanity and generosity of his Excellency the Governor-General on behalf of Miss Cavell, in order that the sentence of death which was passed against her may be commuted, and that this unhappy lady be not executed.

Miss Cavell is the head nurse of the Surgical Institute of Brussels. She has spent her life in alleviating the sufferings of others, and at her school have been trained numerous nurses who, throughout the world, in Germany as in Belgium, have kept watch at the bedside of patients. At the beginning of the war Miss Cavell gave her services to German soldiers as well as to others. Failing other reasons, her humanitarian career is of a nature to inspire pity for her and in advance to secure her pardon.

If the information given me is correct, Miss Cavell, far from hiding herself, with laudable frankness admitted all the facts laid to her charge, and information supplied by her alone, and which she alone could have supplied, was the cause of aggravating the sentence passed on her.

It is with confidence and the hope of its being

favourably received that I pray your Excellency to present to the Governor-General my request for grace in favour of Miss Cavell.

To this letter Mr. Whitlock wrote a postscript in his own hand:—

I am too ill to present my request in person, but I appeal to your goodness of heart to support it and prevent the death of this unhappy woman. Have pity on her!

At the same time Mr. Whitlock addressed an appeal in identical terms to Baron von Bissing, the Governor-General of Belgium.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. G. DE LEVAL'S REPORT.

In opening his Report, Mr. de Leval relates the steps taken for the defence of Miss Cavell already detailed, and states that, on hearing that Mr. Braun was defending her, he had an interview with that gentleman. The Report goes on:—

“ Mr. Braun informed me that personal friends of Miss Cavell had asked him to defend her before the German Court, that he agreed to do so, but that, owing to some unforeseen circumstances, he was prevented from pleading before that Court, adding that he had asked Mr. Kirschen, a member of the Brussels Bar, and his friend, to take up the

case and plead for Miss Cavell, and that Mr. Kirschen had agreed to do so.

"I therefore at once put myself in communication with Mr. Kirschen, who told me that Miss Cavell was prosecuted for having helped soldiers to cross the frontier. I asked him whether he had seen Miss Cavell, and whether she had made any statement to him, and, to my surprise, found that the lawyers defending prisoners before the German Military Court were not allowed to see their clients before the trial, and were not shown any document of the prosecution.

"This, Mr. Kirschen said, was in accordance with the German military rules. He added that the hearing of the trial of such cases was carried out very carefully, and that, in his opinion, although it was not possible to see the client before the trial, in fact, the trial itself developed so carefully and so slowly that it was generally possible to have a fair knowledge of all the facts, and to present a good defence for the prisoner. This would specially be the case for Miss Cavell, because the trial would be rather long, as she was prosecuted with 34 other prisoners.

"I informed Mr. Kirschen of my intention to be present at the trial, so as to watch the case. He immediately dissuaded me from taking such attitude, which he said would cause a great prejudice to the prisoner, because the German judges would resent it and feel it almost as an affront if I was appearing to exercise a kind of supervision on the trial.

"Mr. Kirschen assured me over and over again that the Military Court of Brussels was always perfectly fair, and that there was not the slightest danger of any miscarriage of justice.

"On Saturday I was informed by an outsider

that the trial had taken place, but that no judgment would be reached till a few days later.

"Receiving no report from Mr. Kirschen, I tried to find him, but failed. I then sent him a note on Sunday, asking him to send his report to the Legation, or call there on Monday morning at 8.30. At the same time I obtained from some other person present at the trial some information about what had occurred, and the following facts were disclosed to me:—

"Miss Cavell was prosecuted for having helped English and French soldiers, as well as Belgian young men, to cross the frontier and to go over to England. She had admitted by signing a statement before the day of the trial, and by public acknowledgment in court, in the presence of all the other prisoners and the lawyers, that she was guilty of the charges brought against her, and she had acknowledged not only that she had helped these soldiers to cross the frontier, but also that some of them had thanked her in writing when arriving in England. This last admission made her case so much the more serious, because if it only had been proved against her that she had helped the soldiers to traverse the Dutch frontier, and no proof was produced that those soldiers had reached a country at war with Germany, she could only have been sentenced for an attempt to commit the 'crime' and not for the 'crime' being duly accomplished. As the case stood, the sentence fixed by the German military law was a sentence of death."

Mr. de Leval sets out the German military code on the matter, and adds:—

"In her oral statement before the Court, Miss Cavell disclosed almost all the facts of the whole prosecution. She was questioned in German, an

interpreter translating all the questions in French, with which language Miss Cavell was well acquainted. She spoke without trembling, and showed a clear mind. Often she added some greater precision to her previous depositions.

“ When she was asked why she helped these soldiers to go to England, she replied that she thought that, if she had not done so, they would have been shot by the Germans, and that, therefore, she thought she only did her duty to her country in saving their lives.

“ The Military Public Prosecutor said that argument might be good for English soldiers, but did not apply to Belgian young men whom she induced to cross the frontier, and who would have been perfectly free to remain in the country without danger to their lives.

“ Mr. Kirschen made a very good plea for Miss Cavell, using all arguments that could be brought in her favour before the Court.

“ The Military Public Prosecutor, however, asked the Court to pass a death sentence on Miss Cavell and eight other prisoners amongst the thirty-five. The Court did not seem to agree, and the judgment was postponed.

“ After I had found out these facts (viz., Sunday evening), I called at the Political Division of the German Government in Belgium, and asked whether, now that the trial had taken place, permission would be granted to me to see Miss Cavell in gaol, as surely there was no longer any object in refusing this permission. The German official, Mr. Conrad, said he would make the necessary inquiry at the Court and let me know later on.

“ I also asked him that permission be granted to Mr. Gahan, the English clergyman, to see Miss Cavell.

“ At the same time, we prepared at the Legation, to be ready for every eventuality, a petition for pardon, addressed to the Governor-General in Belgium, and a transmitting note addressed to Baron von der Lancken.

“ Monday morning at eleven I called upon Mr. Conrad on the telephone from the Legation. I asked the German official to inform the Legation immediately after the passing of the judgment, so that I might see Miss Cavell at once.

“ Very surprised to still receive no news from Mr. Kirschen, I then called at his house at 12.30, and was informed that he would not be there till about the end of the afternoon. I then called at 12.40 at the house of another lawyer interested in the case of a fellow-prisoner, and found that he also was out. In the afternoon, however, the latter lawyer called at my house, saying that in the morning he had heard from the German Commandantur that judgment would be passed only the next morning, viz., Tuesday morning.

“ Shortly after this lawyer left me, and while I was preparing a note about the case, at 8 p.m., I was privately and reliably informed that the judgment had been delivered at five o'clock in the afternoon, that Miss Cavell had been sentenced to death, and that she would be shot at two o'clock the next morning. I told my informer that I was extremely surprised at this, because the Legation had received no information yet, neither from the German authorities nor from Mr. Kirschen.

“ According to your Excellency's decision, Mr. Gibson and myself went, with the Spanish Minister, to see Baron von der Lancken, and the report of our interview and of our efforts to save Miss Cavell is given to you by Mr. Gibson.

(Signed) G. DE LEVAL.

In a letter written by Mr. Whitlock, when sending the reports to Mr. Page, the American Ambassador, he says :—

“ I know that you will understand without my telling you that we exhausted every possible effort to prevent the infliction of the death penalty, and that our failure has been felt by us as a very severe blow.

“ I am convinced, however, that no step was neglected which could have had any effect. From the date we first learned of Miss Cavell’s imprisonment we made frequent inquiries of the German authorities, and reminded them of their promise that we should be fully informed as to developments.

“ They were under no misapprehension as to our interest in the matter. Although the German authorities did not inform me when the sentence had actually been passed, I learned through an unofficial source that judgment had been delivered, and that Miss Cavell was to be executed during the night.”

Mr. Whitlock then describes the visit of the members of his staff to Baron von der Lancken to appeal for the execution of the sentence to be deferred.



CHAPTER VIII.

MR. GIBSON'S REPORT.

The report made by Mr. Hugh Gibson to Mr. Page, the American Ambassador in London, gives a graphic and sequential account of the efforts made to save Miss

Cavell as soon as it was known that the death sentence had been pronounced.

The earnest and persevering character of those efforts will ever redound to the credit of all concerned, and do much to remove the popular notion that all diplomatic action is deliberately tardy, and hampered by red tape.

The picture of the two eager representatives of the American Legation and the Spanish Ambassador arguing and pleading far into the night with the obdurate and unsympathetic Baron von der Lancken and the individual members of his staff is painfully vivid and dramatic.

There is a significant passage in the report which aptly illustrates the diabolically-subtle Teutonic diplomacy that endeavoured to shirk and evade responsibility. It is a simple incident, but it reveals very clearly the official and mental attitude of Baron von der Lancken. He asked Mr. Gibson to take back the note he had presented, and was "very insistent."

It is difficult to resist the suggestion of a basely ulterior motive for his refusal to retain the letter of the American Ambassador. German diplomacy has shown the world the light esteem in which it holds its pledged and written word; therefore, it is not straining inuendo uncharitably to infer from this act of Baron von der Lancken that he could foresee a possible advantage in the after-time in being able to declare that he had not received the appeal of the American Minister. Its absence from the official archives would, by some

apologists of this school of diplomacy, be accepted as corroboration of his mendacious denial.

Throughout this tragic interview there is not a gleam of humanity on the German side. Objection, evasion, and politely-expressed savagery appear in every word and act of the German officials; and this makes the ardent humanitarianism and zeal of Mr. Gibson and his colleagues stand out in still greater brilliancy.

The Report is as follows:—

Sir,—Upon learning early yesterday morning (Monday, October 11), through unofficial sources, that the trial of Miss Edith Cavell had been finished on Saturday afternoon, and that the prosecuting Attorney (Kriegsgerichtsrat) had asked for a sentence of death against her, telephonic inquiry was immediately made at the Politische Abteilung (Political Department) as to the facts. It was stated that no sentence had as yet been pronounced, and that there would probably be delay of a day or two before a decision was reached. Mr. Conrad gave positive assurances that the Legation would be fully informed as to developments in this case. Despite these assurances, we made repeated inquiries in the course of the day, the last one being at 6.20 p.m. Belgian time. Mr. Conrad then stated that sentence had not yet been pronounced, and specifically renewed his previous assurances that he would not fail to inform us as soon as there was any news.

At 8.30 it was learned from an outside source that sentence had been passed in the course of the afternoon (before the last conversation with Mr. Conrad), and that the execution would take place during the night. In conformity with your in-

structions, I went (accompanied by Mr. de Leval) to look for the Spanish Minister, and found him dining at the home of Baron Lambert. I explained the circumstances to his Excellency, and asked that (as you were ill and unable to go yourself) he go with us to see Baron von der Lancken and support as strongly as possible the plea which I was to make in your name that execution of the death penalty should be deferred until the Governor could consider your appeal for clemency.

We took with us a note addressed to Baron von der Lancken, and a plea for clemency (*requête en grâce*) addressed to the Governor-General (the two notes mentioned above). The Spanish Minister willingly agreed to accompany us, and we went together to the Politische Abteilung.

Baron von der Lancken and all the members of his staff were absent for the evening. We sent a messenger to ask that he return at once to see us in regard to a matter of utmost urgency. A little after ten o'clock he arrived, followed shortly after by Count Harrach and Herr von Falkenhausen, members of his staff. The circumstances of the case were explained to him, and your note presented, and he read it aloud in our presence. He expressed disbelief in the report that sentence had actually been passed, and manifested some surprise that we should give credence to any report not emanating from official sources. He was quite insistent on knowing the exact source of our information, but this I did not feel at liberty to communicate to him. Baron von der Lancken stated that it was quite improbable that sentence had been pronounced; that, even if so, it would not be executed within so short a time, and that, in any event, it would be quite impossible to take any action before morning.

It was, of course, pointed out to him that, if the facts were as we believed them to be, action would be useless unless taken at once. We urged him to ascertain the facts immediately, and this, after some hesitancy, he agreed to do. He telephoned to the Presiding Judge of the Court-Martial, and returned in a short time to say that the facts were as we had represented them, and that it was intended to carry out the sentence before morning. We then presented as earnestly as possible your plea for delay. So far as I am able to judge, we neglected to present no phase of the matter which might have had any effect, emphasising the horror of executing a woman, no matter what her offence, pointing out that the death sentence had heretofore been imposed only for actual cases of espionage, and that Miss Cavell was not even accused by the German authorities of anything so serious.

I further called attention to the failure to comply with Mr. Conrad's promise to inform the Legation of the sentence. I urged that, inasmuch as the offences charged against Miss Cavell were long since accomplished, and that, as she had been for some weeks in prison, a delay in carrying out the sentence could entail no danger to the German cause. I even went so far as to point out the fearful effect of a summary execution of this sort upon public opinion both here and abroad, and, although I had no authority for doing so, called attention to the possibility that it might bring about reprisals.

The Spanish Minister forcibly supported all our representations, and made an earnest plea for clemency.

Baron von der Lancken stated that the Military Governor was the supreme authority (Gerichtsherr) in matters of this sort; that appeal from his de-

cision could be carried only to the Emperor, the Governor-General having no authority to intervene in such cases. He added that, under the provisions of German martial law, the Military Governor had discretionary powers to accept or to refuse acceptance of an appeal for clemency. After some discussion, he agreed to call the Military Governor on the telephone, and learn whether he had already ratified the sentence, and whether there was any chance for clemency.

He returned in about half an hour, and stated that he had been to confer personally with the Military Governor, who said that he had acted in the case of Miss Cavell only after mature deliberation; that the circumstances in her case were of such a character that he considered the infliction of the death penalty imperative; and that, in view of the circumstances of this case, he must decline to accept your plea for clemency or any representation in regard to the matter.

Baron von der Lancken then asked me to take back the note which I had presented to him. To this I demurred, pointing out that it was not a "*réquête en grâce*," but merely a note to him transmitting a communication to the Governor, which was itself to be considered as the "*réquête en grâce*." I pointed out that this was expressly stated in your note to him, and tried to prevail upon him to keep it. He was very insistent, however, and I finally reached the conclusion that, inasmuch as he had read it aloud to us, and we knew that he was aware of its contents, there was nothing to be gained by refusing to accept the note, and accordingly took it back. Even after Baron von der Lancken's very positive and definite statement that there was no hope, and that under the circumstances "even the Emperor himself could

not intervene," we continued to appeal to every sentiment to secure delay, and the Spanish Minister even led Baron von der Lancken aside in order to say very forcibly a number of things which he would have felt hesitancy in saying in the presence of the younger officers and of Mr. de Leval, a Belgian subject.

His Excellency talked very earnestly with Baron von der Lancken for about a quarter of an hour. During this time Mr. de Leval and I presented to the younger officers every argument we could think of. I reminded them of our untiring efforts on behalf of German subjects at the outbreak of the war and during the siege of Antwerp. I pointed out that while our services had been rendered gladly and without any thought of future favours, they should certainly entitle you to some consideration for the only request of this sort you had made since the beginning of the war. Unfortunately, our efforts were unavailing. We persevered until it was only too clear that there was no hope of securing any consideration for the case.

We left the Politische Abteilung shortly after midnight, and I immediately returned to the Legation to report to you.

(Signed) HUGH GIBSON.

It would be difficult to find a parallel for the cold-blooded infamy of this story of German official blood-guiltiness. It is safe to prophecy that it will live and have a place in history with such records of official malignity and pettiness as the execution of the Emperor Maximilian, Lady Jane Grey, and Marie Antoinette. American journalistic virulence was fully justified for once when the "New York Herald" headed its ac-

count of the hurrying to death of Miss Cavell, "Nana Sahib in Belgium." The butcher tyrant of Cawnpore is a fitting complement to the portraits of von der Lancken and Bissing.

The points brought out by Mr. Gibson should be impressed upon the memory as a corrective to the denials and apologies with which time invariably covers the blots and scars of history, as the moss and lichen obliterate the lettering on the tombstone that records the virtues of the dead.

First, we have the inexplicable fact that the Advocate who defended Miss Cavell failed to keep the promise he made to report on the result to the Legation which employed him; and this, notwithstanding that the trial ended on the afternoon of the 8th, and sentence was not pronounced till the 11th. Next, when Mr. Conrad, the proper official to consult in the matter, was seen by Mr. Gibson at 6.30, on the day of the sentence, he denied that Miss Cavell's fate had been decided, though he must have been aware that she had been sentenced over an hour before. By 8 o'clock no word of it had been sent to the American Legation, which, by every recognised law of international conduct, was entitled to have prompt information on a matter wherein it was so vitally interested. Further, when at 10 o'clock Baron von der Lancken is seen by Messrs. Gibson and de Leval with the Spanish Ambassador, that sinister diplomat at first denied, and pretended surprise that the news should be

credited, then prevaricated childishly. When no longer able to resist the truth, he adopted the manner of the convicted liar, and bullied, admitting the brutal facts in the most offensive manner compatible with official dignity.

The most charitable attempt to find an excuse for Baron von der Lancken and his fellow-ruffian, General von Bissing, must fail. It is absolutely clear that the object of these lies and subterfuges was to trick and deceive the American Legation and secure the secret and expeditious butchery of Miss Cavell before more official interference or protest could be received. Unfortunately, German perfidy succeeded, as it too often has—for the time.

That the intent and spirit of von der Lancken and his partner were approved by German officialism is amply proved by a subsequent demand made for the recall of Mr. Whitlock by the "Vossische Zeitung," an influential semi-official German journal. "The recent Cavell incident," it says, "must be used as the occasion to put an end to Mr. Whitlock's action. If America wants a representative at Brussels, it must send someone agreeable to the German Government."



CHAPTER IX.

SIR E. GREY'S COMMENT.

Sir Edward Grey's comments are added in the following document issued from the Foreign Office :—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the United States Ambassador, and has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of his Excellency's note of the 18th, enclosing a copy of a dispatch from the United States Minister at Brussels respecting the execution of Miss Edith Cavell at that place.

Sir E. Grey is confident that the news of the execution of this noble Englishwoman will be received with horror and disgust not only in the Allied States, but throughout the civilised world. Miss Cavell was not even charged with espionage, and the fact that she had nursed numbers of wounded German soldiers might have been regarded as a complete reason in itself for treating her with leniency.

The attitude of the German authorities is, if possible, rendered worse by the discreditable efforts successfully made by the officials of the German Civil Administration at Brussels to conceal the fact that sentence had been passed and would be carried out immediately. These efforts were no doubt prompted by the determination to carry out the sentence before an appeal from the finding of the Court-Martial could be made to a higher authority, and show in the clearest manner that the German authorities concerned were well aware that the

carrying out of the sentence was not warranted by any consideration.

Further comment on their proceedings would be superfluous.

Sir Edward Grey also expresses the grateful thanks of the Government to Mr. Whitlock and his staff and to the Marquis de Villalohar for their untiring efforts.

CHAPTER X.

THE MARTYR'S LAST WORDS.

Permission was given by the authorities to the British chaplain in Brussels, the Rev. H. S. T. Gahan, to visit Miss Cavell on the evening of Monday, after sentence had been pronounced. His account of a scene that will long be quoted as an example of how a brave English-woman met a martyr's death is eloquent in its brevity and simplicity, and for that reason leaves much to the imagination, yet gives an intensely graphic impression of the Christian fortitude and womanly dignity which characterised Edith Cavell throughout. A volume from the pen of a master of word-painting could not have conveyed a more realistic picture.

The account was sent to the American Minister in

Brussels, and forwarded by him to the American Ambassador in London.

Mr. Gahan writes:—

“On Monday evening, October 11, I was admitted by special passport from the German authorities to the prison of St. Gilles, where Miss Edith Cavell had been confined for ten weeks. The final sentence had been given early that afternoon.

“To my astonishment and relief, I found my friend perfectly calm and resigned. But this could not lessen the tenderness and intensity of feeling on either part during that last interview of almost an hour.

“Her first words to me were upon a matter concerning herself personally, but the solemn asseveration which accompanied them was made expressly in the light of God and Eternity. She then added that she wished all her friends to know that she willingly gave her life for her country, and said, ‘I have no fear nor shrinking; I have seen death so often that it is not strange or fearful to me.’

“She further said, ‘I thank God for this ten weeks’ quiet before the end.’ ‘Life has always been hurried and full of difficulty.’ ‘This time of rest has been a great mercy.’ ‘They have all been very kind to me here. But this I would say, standing as I do in view of God and Eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone.’

“We partook of the Holy Communion together, and she received the Gospel message of consolation with all her heart. At the close of the little service I began to repeat the words ‘Abide With Me,’ and she joined softly in the end.

"We sat quietly talking until it was time for me to go. She gave me parting messages for relations and friends. She spoke of her soul's needs at the moment, and she received the assurance of God's Word as only the Christian can do.

"Then I said 'Good-bye,' and she smiled, and said, 'We shall meet again.'

"The German Military Chaplain was with her at the end, and afterwards gave her Christian burial.

"He told me: 'She was brave and bright to the last. She professed her Christian faith, and that she was glad to die for her country. She died like a heroine.'

"(Signed) H. STIRLING T. GAHAN,

"British Chaplain.

"Brussels."

This account is supplemented by Mr. de Leval, who says:—

"This morning (Tuesday), Mr. Gahan, the English clergyman, called to see me, and told me that he had seen Miss Cavell in her cell yesterday night at ten o'clock, that he had given her the Holy Communion, and had found her admirably strong and calm. I asked Mr. Gahan whether she had made any remarks about anything concerning the legal side of her case, and whether the confession which she made before the trial and in Court was in his opinion perfectly free and sincere. Mr. Gahan says that she told him she perfectly well knew what she had done, that according to the law of course she was guilty and had admitted her guilt, but that she was happy to die for her country."

CHAPTER XI. THE EXECUTION.

There is no official report of the last sad scene. This is distinctly noteworthy, since it lends additional weight to the suggestion that the execution of Miss Cavell was prompted more by that rabid hate of England and her sons and daughters than by any recognition of the ethical aspect of the case.

It is an accepted axiom that the sole object of every punishment is to deter, by its example and effect, others from repeating the acts of the offender. If this be not the object, then it becomes mere savage vengeance. A secret trial and execution defeat the just end of punishment, since the crime and its consequences to the wrong-doer can be known only to a few, and its lesson lost so far as the vast majority of possible criminals is concerned. It is evident that but for the vigorous action of the American Legation the offence of Miss Cavell would have been known to practically no one, and her case disposed of with the secrecy and promptitude which has been the fate of hundreds of victims of German Martial Law.

The conduct of Baron von der Lancken and General von Bissing, in their unscrupulous efforts to conceal the facts, make it clear that vengeance, and not justice, was their dominating motive.

In the absence of any official report of the execution

we have to rely upon that furnished by a correspondent of an influential and reliable Dutch journal, the Amsterdam "Telegraaf." It states that the soldiers who were ordered to shoot Miss Cavell were so overcome by distress at her fate, and admiration of the brave manner in which she faced death, that the entire firing party deliberately fired over her head. The officer in charge, seeing that it would be almost impossible to make them commit this murder, took his revolver and shot her dead himself, the shot entering her head, close to the ear.

The same journal records that the German firing squad, at the execution of Mme. Louise Frenay, at Liège, a few weeks before, were similarly influenced. The majority fired over her head, she being struck by one bullet only, and that on the leg. The commanding officer was, therefore, compelled to give the coup de grâce by shooting the wounded woman with his revolver, placed at her ear.

These dramatic stories have many precedents, and there is no good reason for not accepting them. It would not be necessary that the firing party should openly manifest their repugnance. It has often occurred at military executions that an individual member of a firing party has purposely aimed high, feeling that, while his conscience would be clear, there would be little fear of the fact that he had failed to obey orders being discovered. In the case of Miss Cavell the same humane impulse seems to have actuated

all of the executioners; and, even if the story be not true, there is a source of satisfaction in believing that it is.



CHAPTER XII.

BRITISH STATESMEN'S CONDEMNATION.

Following the restrained but stinging utterance of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, came a vigorous outburst from the Home Secretary, Sir John Simon, in an interview he granted to the representative of the Associated Press of America. The case of Miss Cavell, he said, had, and could have, no parallel in the record of Great Britain's treatment of persons accused of military offences. Even in cases of clearly proved espionage, Great Britain had meted out to a woman no sentence of death. "No woman," said Sir John, "who has been tried for any military offence in this country has suffered the death penalty since the war began, or has even been sentenced to death. In this country a woman, of whatever nationality, is always tried by a civil court."

There were no cases in England, said Sir John, precisely similar to that of Miss Cavell, but in cases of espionage, where guilt was indubitable and overwhelming, the same traditional privileges were allowed accused. "In the last case involving a woman in this

country, the offender was of German birth, though technically a subject of another country owing to marriage. She was acting in association with a male spy, and was detected travelling to various points in order to collect information about naval defences. The evidence against her was overwhelming, and did not depend solely on witnesses, but on documents found in her possession and letters written by her and her associates. She was tried in September by three civil judges of our High Court and a jury, and was convicted, not of harbouring German soldiers, but of deliberate and persistent spying for the purpose of providing the enemy with important information. Her male companion was condemned to death; she was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment."

The Home Secretary explained that, in addition to the privileges of adequate defence, there was always an opportunity for reconsidering the sentence.

Asked what cognisance was taken by the British Government of the inquiries by neutral diplomats in this country, in connection with trials for espionage and similar offences, Sir John Simon said: "In any case when the accused has claimed to have connection with a neutral country, we have not waited for application to be made to us. We thought it right to give the neutral Embassy information of the arrest. It has happened in several cases that the accused was carrying what he alleged to be a United States passport. In such cases, as the others, the American Embassy was

consulted, and the solicitors and counsel for defence were retained with the Embassy's approval."

Replying to a question whether in Great Britain execution could follow the sentence as quickly as in the recent case in Belgium, the Home Secretary said: "Execution never follows a sentence here without a proper interval. Indeed, there was a case not long ago, when, on the eve of the execution, a postponement was requested, in order that some further representation might be considered. The sentence was postponed for a week, and the whole case was reviewed. In a case now pending the accused says he wishes to call evidence from the other side of the world, and we have postponed the final trial from August to December.

"Mind you, I am not claiming any credit for the British Government for our procedure. There is nothing unusual, to my mind, in taking care that accused persons have the fullest opportunity for their defence. The thing which strikes Englishmen as most incredible in the case of Miss Cavell is the calculated indifference with which the inquiries of the American and Spanish Ministers were treated. If the excuse is suggested that in time of war severe and harsh measures have to be taken, our own experience is enough to show that it is possible to combine a regard for the rights of the accused, and the respect for humane considerations, with the effect of punishment of hostile offences of the most serious kind.

“It would have seemed impossible for the Germans to have done anything to increase the horror they have produced by their behaviour in Belgium. It would have seemed impossible, also, for them to have done anything which could cement more closely the bond of sympathy between the populations of England and Belgium. But,” concluded Sir John, “they have accomplished both impossibilities by one horrible act of brutality.”

Answering a question by the Earl of Desart, in the House of Lords,

The Marquis of Lansdowne said he doubted whether any incident had moved the people more than the manner in which this poor lady was—he supposed he must say—executed in cold blood. It was no doubt the case that she might by her conduct have rendered herself liable to punishment—perhaps severe punishment—for acts committed in violation of the kind of law which prevailed when war was going on. But he had no hesitation in saying that she might at any rate have expected that measure of mercy which he believed in no civilised country would have been refused to one who was not only a woman, but a brave and devoted woman, and one who had given all her efforts and energies to the mitigation of the sufferings of others.

A full report by His Majesty's Minister to Belgium relating to the circumstances under which Miss Cavell was executed was forwarded to the Foreign Office by the United States Ambassador. They learned from this report that the representatives of the United States and of Spain at Brussels

up to the very last moment neglected no opportunity or effort in order to obtain a commutation of the death sentence or even a period of suspense before that sentence was carried into effect. But those efforts failed.

His Lordship added that two French ladies had been condemned to death on a charge of sheltering British and fugitive soldiers. These ladies were to have been executed on Monday last, but he was glad to be able to say that, as the result of strong representations made by his Majesty the King of Spain and by the Pope, the execution of those sentenced had been postponed pending consideration by the German Emperor of the reports of both cases.



CHAPTER XIII. FROM THE PULPITS.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells described the act as atrocious, and one that would not be allowed even under Lynch Law in America.

The Bishop of Barking stigmatised the crime as a foul outrage, while Canon Alexandra, preaching at St. Paul's Cathedral, said the "savage murder" revealed the depths to which a nation could fall when it threw off the restraints of pity and chivalry, of magnanimity and mercy. The act was worthy alike of the men who ordered it and of the men who perpetrated it. Since the sinking of the "Lusitania," nothing had

done so much to harden the already immutable resolve of the country to make an utter end of this cancerous growth in human life.

Dr. F. B. Meyer said the murder—for no other word properly characterised the dastardly deed by which a noble and unselfish life was brought to a premature close—would lie at the Kaiser's door, unless he took steps to disavow the act of those who passed and inflicted the death penalty. It was the latest and worst of the German crimes against womanhood. This outrageous crime would surely be a clarion call to the men of the nation to answer in their tens of thousands the splendid challenge of the King. Let croakers and grumblers hold their peace, and, by God's help, we would maintain to the point of victory the great cause for which Nurse Cavell died.

The Bishop of London, in preaching the Trafalgar Day Sermon, at St. Martin in the Fields, said:—

“The cold-blooded murder of Miss Cavell, a poor English girl, deliberately shot by Germans for housing refugees, will run the sinking of the ‘Lusitania’ close in the civilised world as the greatest crime in history. There is one thing about the incident which, perhaps, was not taken into account by those who perpetrated the crime (continued the Bishop): It will settle the matter once for all about recruiting in Great Britain. There will be no need now of compulsion. I wonder what Nelson would have said if he had been told that an Englishwoman had been shot in cold blood by the members of any other nation?

He would have made more than the diplomatic inquiries which have been made by a great neutral into this crime, right and proper as those inquiries are. He would have made his inquiries by the thunder of the guns of the British Fleet, and pressed the question with the Nelson touch which won Trafalgar, as, indeed, our own Fleet at this moment is only too ready to do. But is it possible that there is one young man in England to-day who will sit still under this monstrous wrong? The three million new recruits asked for will be there. Why was she put to death? Why was she murdered? Three thousand thousand Englishmen, and Scotsmen and Irishmen, too, will know the reason why. God's curse is on the nation that tramples underfoot and defies the laws of chivalry which once relieved the horrors of war."



CHAPTER XIV.

BRITISH METHODS: A COMPARISON.

How striking is the contrast between German and British ideas of justice under practically identical conditions is illustrated by recalling the case of the man Ahlers, who was tried for exactly the same action which cost Miss Cavell her life.

Ahlers was tried for high treason at the Durham Assizes, on December 8th and 9th, 1914, the indictment setting forth that he had aided men who

were liable to serve in the German Army to leave this country after the declaration of war. Evi-



VON BISSING.

dence showed that he purchased from Cook's tourist office nine tickets for the Continent. On his behalf it was urged that he did not know at the time he did this

that a state of war existed between this country and Germany. The Solicitor-General charged the jury that they would be false to their oaths if they did not find the prisoner guilty should they be convinced that what he did was to aid the King's enemies, but asked them not to strain the law to convict the prisoner. The jury, however, unanimously found Ahlers guilty, and he was sentenced to death.

So anxious were the Government to remove any impression that this was the last word in the matter that an official notice was published next morning saying that if on the appeal the conviction was affirmed, the Home Secretary would consider the question of advising a commutation of the death sentence with a view to substituting a term of penal servitude or imprisonment. Events turned out even better for the naturalised German. The Court of Criminal Appeal quashed the conviction, holding that the material point of the purpose and intention of the prisoner was not left to the jury in the way it ought to have been. So Ahlers was released, and came south to reside at Surbiton. According to the German standard of ruthless "justice," he should have been shot dead in Durham at two o'clock on the morning after his sentence was pronounced. But he had the good fortune to be under the administration of scrupulous British justice.

Many other examples of British care to do no injustice could be given.

A curate's German wife who sought information about a shell factory got only six months at Darlington. "Had you the slightest intention of passing on the information to Germans?" asked her counsel in support of her appeal against the conviction. "I am afraid so," was the answer, which led the judge in upholding the conviction to give her a certificate of character as "a German afflicted with a conscience."

A German master seaman arrested at Newcastle was found to have been at Elswick for five months, and to have in his possession a Board of Trade document marked: "Private and confidential; on no account to be allowed to fall into the hands of enemies." But the punishment was only six months, with hard labour.

The painstaking examination in London of the German officers of the so-called "hospital" ship will also be remembered as an instance of the clean English way.



CHAPTER XV.

WORLD-WIDE INDIGNATION.

The outburst of reprobation that followed immediately on the news of the murder of Miss Cavell was world-wide. Outside the countries whose authorities

were responsible for the crime, the Press and leaders of public opinion have expressed their horror and detestation with a vehemence that only an atrocity of such magnitude could justify. From the pulpit have come words of fervent eloquence that will live to keep alive for generations the fire of honest hate against Germany long after the details of a thousand other infamies are forgotten.

AMERICAN OPINION.

The American Press, after its wont, expressed itself in epigrammatic and caustic headlines that were justified by the outspokenness of the editorial opinions they heralded.

The "New York Tribune" published a cartoon depicting the Kaiser, with a smoking pistol in his hand, standing over the body of a woman and patting himself complacently on the chest as he remarks: "Gott mit Uns." In a scathing editorial, the "Tribune" says: "Looking at the courage and heroism of this British woman, is it possible to believe that British men will fail where women have succeeded so gloriously To believe this is to believe true all the Germans have said about British decadence, weakness, and futility. Something there is of enduring grandeur in this woman's sacrifice. It is an act that mobilises all that is real and enduring in the race. Its results will be found in all the days to come until the great day when Europe

frees herself from a tyranny which is both brutal and stupid, and which in its stupidity has sealed its doom."

The "World" says:—

"That the young woman violated military law is admitted. Although the offending necessitated punishment, it would occur only to the mind of a German or Turkish military autocrat to impose and carry out the death penalty. Americans will never understand the mental processes of a people who are capable not only of tolerating such a military system but of exalting it.

"German psychology in the Cavell case is as inexplicable to us as German psychology in the 'Lusitania' matter. What everybody not a German knows is that the Germans might better have lost an army corps than have shot Miss Cavell for a comparatively trivial offence. Her blood is a blot on the German Army and Government for generations to come. It is one of those stains that cannot be erased, and centuries hence German historians will be apologising for the ruthlessness of the military commander who was unable to see that common-sense is mightier than the letter of military law."

The "Times" says that in the tribunal of civilisation the Germans have done themselves immeasurable hurt by their savagery against those who opposed them. Germany has brought herself into a position where the world turns from her in horror, and dreads nothing so much as the success of her arms. The executioners of Miss Cavell only carried out the spirit and purpose of the Imperial military policy. They did their part in the working of the brutal and monstrous engine. It is because of this spirit and these deeds that Germany has lost her standing among civilised nations de-

voted to ideals of humanity and progress. It is because of these things that the prayer goes up in all peaceful countries that her enemies may triumph to the end that such ruthless rule may not be established in power upon the earth.

The "Chicago Post" declares that Miss Cavell's execution is one more first-rank blunder of German statesmanship. The "Chicago Journal" says that assisting prisoners to escape is by military law a crime, but by every instinct of humanity it is a virtue—a virtue inseparable from all Western ideals of womanhood.

The New York "Evening Post" likens it to one of the butcheries of Judge Jeffries, and declares that this execution of a pure and good woman adds to the blackness of Germany's record, which is already one of the blackest in history. In the eyes of Count Reventlow, says the "Post," the killing of Miss Cavell may be a noble act; in the eyes of many of his countrymen it may appear justifiable though abhorrent, but at least let the Germans not charge Englishmen with hypocrisy in giving vent to fierce indignation.

DENOUNCED BY A FRIEND OF THE KAISER.

Mr. Hermann Ridder, the personal friend of the Kaiser, and the well-known editor of the German organ, the "Staats Zeitung," of New York, in an interview, said: "It is terrible. There never should be the necessity to execute a woman under any circumstances. German commanders may, in the heat of war, do things that the people would not sanction, but the case of Miss Cavell is different. She was executed after a military trial. I am certain that if the case had been laid before

the Kaiser he would have extended his pardon to her as in the case of the other women."

Mr. Oscar Strauss, former American Ambassador to Turkey, who is of German origin, in speaking of the crime, said: "It is one of the most atrocious incidents in the history of modern war. It adds another crime to the already long list of German outrages. The act will be resented the world over."

MR. BRAND WHITLOCK.

Mr. Brand Whitlock was well known in America as an author and a reformer, before he was appointed American Minister in Belgium. Human sympathy was in his blood, says the "Times." His father, a Methodist minister, was the son of one of the earliest of the Abolitionists, whose home in Urbana, Ohio, was one of the stations of the "underground railroad" for fugitive slaves. In 1887, at the age of eighteen, Brand Whitlock became a reporter for several of the local newspapers of Toledo, Ohio. Three years later he went to Chicago as special reporter and political editor of the "Chicago Herald." In 1893 he was appointed secretary to the Governor of Illinois, and in the following year he took up the study of law. A year later he was admitted to the Bar. In 1897 he gave up his post on the "Herald" in order to devote all his time to law, and opened an office in Toledo. Eight years later he was elected Mayor of Toledo as an Independent,

and at once began a struggle for municipal reform, the main item in his programme being Home Rule on all subjects of a purely local nature. He was re-elected Mayor for three successive terms of two years, but declined nomination for the fifth term two years before his appointment in the Diplomatic Service. He is the author of a number of novels, a biographical work, essays, poems, and short stories. Among his best-known books is "The Turn of the Balance," published in 1907, in which he arraigns the law as it is administered in the United States, and pleads for human justice and sympathy.

MR. H. S. GIBSON.

Mr. Hugh Simons Gibson is a native of Los Angeles, California. He was appointed to his first post in the American Diplomatic Service—the post of Second Secretary to the American Embassy in London—at the age of twenty-six. A year later, in 1910, he returned to the United States to take up a position in the office of the Secretary of State at Washington. In the following year he went to Havana as Charge d'Affaires. His persistence in pressing certain claims of his Government against the Cuban Government made him unpopular among a section of the Cuban people, and on one occasion a journalist with a grievance knocked him down in the street and injured him severely. During his half-dozen years of service—he is still only in his

thirty-third year—he has had more than an ordinary share of adventure, and has earned the name in Diplomatic circles of “The Stormy Petrel.”

DUTCH OPINION.

‘The Dutch papers were emphatic in their denunciation of the crime.

“Nieuws Van Den Dag” trusts that, in the name of humanity, protests will be raised from all sides. The journal exclaims:—

“What poor psychologists German officials and officers seem to be! They started with the request to the Belgian Government for free passage; they then overwhelmed the neutral Press with one-sided reports regarding the ‘Lusitania’ case and the visits of Zeppelins to undefended towns; finally, incidents of this sort! Everywhere they betray a lack of the most elementary conception of psychology.”

The “Handelsblad” states it cannot understand the attitude of the German Governor-General, which, it says, will have greater influence in England than any military defeat.

The “Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant” considers it a lack of intelligence on the part of Miss Cavell’s judges if they believed that the sentence would be a warning to others. On the contrary, it says, the incident will aggravate the feeling of bitter anger, not only among Germany’s enemies, and especially in Belgium, but “in neutral countries, also, it will strengthen the

opinion that the German authorities administer Belgium with unnecessary cruelty and unnecessary harshness, and are not at all entitled to complain about the small amount of co-operation given them by the Belgian people."



CHAPTER XVI.

THE REQUEST FOR THE BODY.

With the thoroughness that stamped every action of the American Legation in its conduct of the matter, the day of the murder Mr. Whitlock wrote to Baron von der Lancken, asking that the body of his victim might be delivered to the School of Nurses, of which she was Directress. It is almost superfluous to add that this reasonable request was met with the same evasion, and, finally, deliberate refusal, as others addressed to Baron von der Lancken.

The following is a translation of the letter, which was written in French :—

"Your Excellency,

"I am requested by M. Faider, First President of the Brussels Court of Appeal, and President of the Belgian School of Certificated Nurses, to ask on behalf of this institution for the body of Miss Cavell, who was one of its directors, and who was executed this morning.

"The Committee pledges itself, in carrying

away the body and preserving it in the cemetery of the Brussels district, to conform to all the rules which the German administration may deem it useful to prescribe.

"I am convinced that no objection will be raised to this demand, and that the institution to which Miss Cavell so charitably devoted a part of her life will not be refused the opportunity of discharging this pious duty.

"I therefore take the liberty of supporting the request of the Belgian School of Certificated Nurses, and, while awaiting your Excellency's reply, beg to assure you once more of my high consideration.

"(Signed) BRAND WHITLOCK.

"To his Excellency, M. le Baron von der Lancken, Brussels."

The fate of this application is told by Mr. Whitlock in a letter he wrote to the American Ambassador in London:—

"American Legation,

"Brussels,

"October 14, 1915.

"My Dear Colleague,

"Referring to my letter of yesterday in regard to the case of Miss Cavell, I beg to enclose herewith further correspondence in regard to my request that her body be delivered to the School for Nurses of which she was the Directress.

"I have not received a written reply to my note to Baron von der Lancken on the subject, but he came to see me yesterday afternoon, and stated that the body had been interred near the prison of St. Gilles, where the execution took place, that under the regulations governing such cases it was impossible to exhume the body without written

permission from the Minister of War in Berlin. He added that he had no authority to ask permission to exhume the body, but that immediately upon the return of the Governor-General he would request him to take the matter up.

"I shall hope to be able to tell you that we have at least been able to accomplish this small service.

"I am, my dear colleague, with ever kind regards,

"Very sincerely,
"(Signed) BRAND WHITLOCK."

Up to the time of the publication of this volume the Governor-General has given no sign of having taken the matter up.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SPANISH MINISTER'S EFFORTS.

The following is the full text of the letter in which Sir Edward Grey acknowledged the services of the Spanish Ambassador:—

"Foreign Office, October 20, 1915.

"Your Excellency,—I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received through the United States Ambassador at this Court a copy of a dispatch from the United States Minister at Brussels respecting the execution at that place of Miss Edith Cavell, a British subject.

"It appears from Mr. Whitlock's report that the Spanish Minister at Brussels accompanied Mr. Hugh Gibson, Secretary to the United States Legation at Brussels, on his visit to the German

civil authorities at Brussels after the sentence passed on Miss Cavell became known, and did all he could to secure a commutation of the capital sentence.

“His Majesty’s Government much appreciate the efforts made by the Marquis de Villalobar on this occasion, and the sentiments of humanity and chivalry which animated him, and they would be grateful if your Excellency would be good enough to so inform the Spanish Government.

“I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,

“Your Excellency’s most obedient humble servant,

“E. GREY.

“His Excellency, Señor Don Alfonso Merry del Val.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MARTYR’S MESSAGE.

Among the many eloquent outpourings inspired by the martyrdom of Edith Cavell, none have equalled in thought-compelling beauty that of Mr. H. Wilson Harris, who struck a note that will be responded to universally when he began with the arresting phrase, “Germany has raised a statue to Von Hindenburg. England is raising a statue to Edith Cavell. The soldier who has slain his ten thousands is commemorated in mouldering wood, and the woman who healed, and saved, and died in enduring marble. On the pedestal of one is doubtless inscribed in the specific words, or their equivalent, ‘Deutschland uber Alles.’ On the other must be written this: ‘Standing as I do in the view of God and of Eternity, I realise that

patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone!'" The writer proceeds to indicate one of the main reasons why the sacrifice of Edith Cavell has so affected the heart of the world—the universal instinct that sets violence to a woman on a different plane of crime from violence to a man. That Miss Cavell was a nurse intensified, if anything could intensify, the blackness of the crime. In time of prosperity and health we may pay no conscious tribute to the army of healing women in our midst; yet a nurse's uniform is an unfailing defence against the insult of even a ribald word in foul slums. It is not strange that the world should thrill with horror of the Brussels murder. It would be incredible that it should not." After remarking that it is curious that England's last great war should have left for its chief memory a woman's name—that of Florence Nightingale—who will be eternally remembered, the writer goes on to say: "It is too soon to say the same with certainty of Edith Cavell. Yet the light kindled in the Brussels cell has qualities of endurance unknown even to the lamp that glowed in the wards of Scutari. A compelling sanction attaches to words solemnised by impending death; and as her dying message Edith Cavell bequeaths the discovery that patriotism is not enough, and the witness comes from the lips of one of whom an enemy has testified that she died like a heroine, dying gladly for her country. Overshadowing even the vision of the peril of England was the vision of the travail of the world. And is it the wider or the narrower vision that enshrines the greater truth? Standing where we stand to-day, the very fabric and texture of life blackened irreparably by the memory of Louvain and the "Lusitania" and of Edith Cavell herself, how can we speak of a patriotism that in itself is not enough, that cannot be enough till it is purified of all hatred or bitterness towards anyone? In what dis-

tant future shall we be able to say without hypocrisy what Edith Cavell said? Those who loathe most the very thought of war—many of them are fighting to-day or will be fighting to-morrow—those who have cheerfully accepted the reproach of pacifism, are asking nothing better than never to see a German face or hear German speech again. It is the story of Miss Cavell that drives to that—the story that rises to its imperishable sublimity in the affirmation that patriotism qualified by hatred and bitterness is not enough. Not even the authority the words derive from their setting commend them if they are not true. But they are true. And their truth must be the rock on which the foundations of the new world are laid.



CHAPTER XIX.

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE AT ST. PAUL'S.

Rarely has a Memorial Service elicited such widespread sympathy and adhesion as that held at St. Paul's on Friday, the 29th October, 1915, when many times over the number possible of accommodation within the spacious building assembled in the chilly mist hours before the doors were opened. Fifteen minutes after the entrance of the first arrivals, a notice was posted to the effect that every space was occupied, and thousands turned disappointed away.

It was not the prospect of a gorgeous display that attracted the vast crowd, for few national events in that historic edifice have been less marked by pomp

and pageantry. It is true the representative of the King, the Chief Magistrate, the Prime Minister, and many other members of the Legations were present, but there was nothing in the form of an appeal to pathos and mere sensationalism.

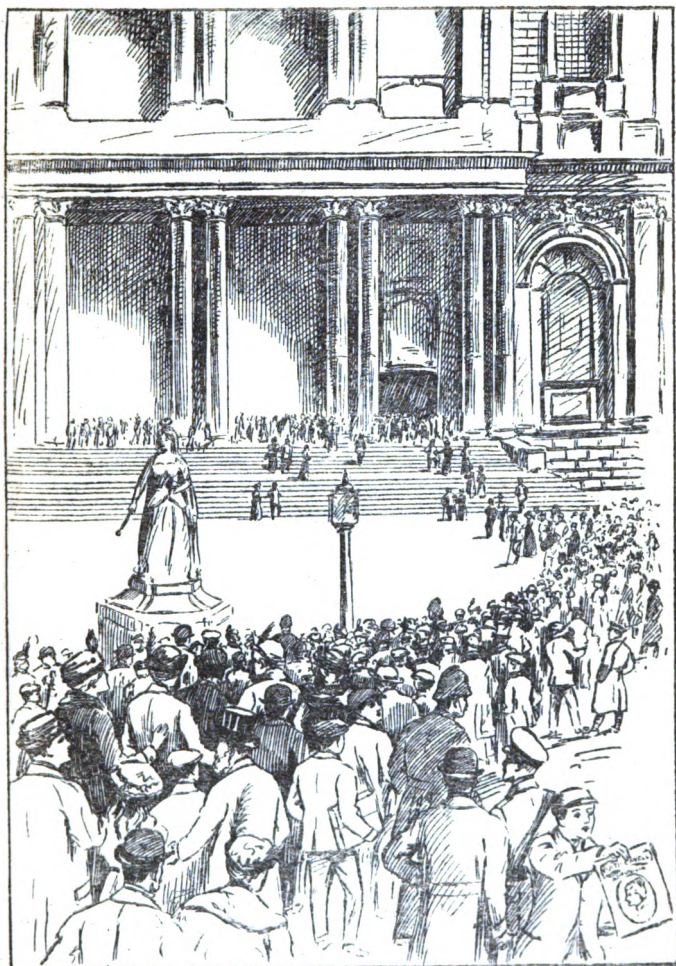
Quite one-half of the space beneath the dome was filled with representatives of the noble profession that had been adorned, and glorified yet more, if that be possible, by the heroine whose memory that mass of sympathetic humanity had come to do reverence and honour to. It was essentially a woman's celebration. Here and there patches of khaki revealed the presence of Army Doctors and other male participators in the great struggle in which Edith Cavell played her part.

The mother of the dead heroine was not present. An abstention well justified, for its pathos would have been too poignant, and perhaps theatrical, if such a word may be used in connection with so solemn an occasion.

It was in keeping with that womanly tact and recognition of the grace of self-effacement that Queen Alexandra's presence should not only be unadvertised, but, so far as the crowd was aware, non-existent. Her Majesty arrived in strict privacy, occupied during the impressive service an unostentatious position, and left as secretly as she had come. Indeed, Her Majesty's presence had not been anticipated even by the authorities, for it had been officially notified that, like the King, she would be represented only.

Miss Cavell was represented by her brother and sister and a number of personal friends, who occupied seats well in front, but, for the most part, were free from that trying scrutiny that comes with public recognition.

Immediately in front sat the representative of the King, Mr. E. W. Wallington, and a number of distinguished people. Mr. Asquith was seen for the first



ST. PAUL'S.

time since his indisposition, and Mrs. Asquith and Miss Asquith sat with him. In the same front row were Sir John Simon, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Runciman, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Sir A. Keogh (representing Lord Kitchener), Mrs. McKenna (Mr. McKenna being prevented by public business from attending), Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Lord Derby, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Lord and Lady Stamfordham, the Rev. S. Lipson, Jewish Chaplain to the Forces, and others.

The congregation also included Lord Charles Beresford, Lord Sandhurst, Mr. Francis Maclaren, M.P., and Mrs. Maclaren, Mr. D. McLean, M.P., Sir George Reid (High Commissioner for Australia), Sir George Perley (High Commissioner for Canada), the Belgian Minister and Mme. Hymans, Lord George Hamilton, Sir Charles Henry, M.P., Sir Herbert and Lady Jekyll, the Hon. A. Stanley (Chairman of the Joint Committee of the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John), Mr. Hall Caine, Lady Truscott, Mr. Frank Hastings (Secretary of the Red Cross Society), the Hon. W. Goschen and Sir Benjamin Franklin, Lord Plymouth, Sir Richard Temple and Sir Robert Hudson (representing the St. John Ambulance Society). The Queen Alexandra Imperial Nursing Service was represented by Miss Becher, Matron-in-Chief, and the Territorial Nursing Service by Mrs. Sidney Browne, Matron-in-Chief.

The Lord Mayor (Sir Charles Johnson) was absent through indisposition, but Alderman Sir Vezey Strong, as Deputy Chief Magistrate, and the Sheriffs attended in State. Interspersed amongst the congregation were many members of the Empire's fighting forces, not a few of them wounded. About 600 nurses were accommodated with reserved seats, and many were also to be seen in the part reserved for the general public.

The only note of colour in the vast assembly, apart

from the red-capped nurses, was supplied by the gorgeous vestments of the Deputy Lord Mayor and Aldermen. Even the band of the 1st Life Guards, usually on such occasions resplendent in colour, was in the subdued khaki of active service.

The opening of the service was signalised by the roll of drums, a prelude to that most heart and emotion-stirring of all classic funeral strains, Chopin's "Funeral March," the first notes of which brought the massed assembly to its feet.

Then, slowly and reverently, came the procession into the choir, bringing into prominence the specially striking and significant figure of Dr. Bury, the Bishop of Central Europe, who appointed the British Chaplain of Brussels, whose name will always be inseparably associated with one of the most inspiring "last sad scenes" of history. Close to him was the veteran Bishop of London, war-worn, yet energetic and virile.

The service began with the hymn "Abide with Me," which Mr. Gahan repeated to Miss Cavell at the end of the little service in the prison of St. Gilles. As they sang the last verse, "Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes," many must have remembered that the Chaplain was able to report: "And she joined softly in the end."

Yet the verse before the last was the one that seemed attuned most perfectly to the occasion:—

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.

The Psalms were the "De Profundis"—"Out of the deep have I called unto Thee"—and "The Lord is my Shepherd," both tenderly sung to Croft's gracious setting.

After the Lesson beginning "Now is Christ risen

from the dead," from the Burial Service, the Dead March in "Saul" was played by band and organ together. Never had Handel's great music seemed less fraught with the terror of death and more eloquent of the spirit's triumph.

"Then I said 'Good-bye,' and she smiled and said, 'We shall meet again.' " Through the thunder-clouds of the music broke that smile. "She was brave and bright to the last." There were tears, but she would hardly have wished them, for, as the German Military Chaplain said, she was "glad" to die for her country.

When the last notes of the march had ceased, the choir sang, with exquisite feeling, the gravely beautiful music of the Kieff Chant to the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, "Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servant with Thy saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting . . ." The effect was singularly moving, after the fierce harmonies of what had gone before.

It was a deeply impressive service, arranged with devout artistry for the production of a reverential effect.

Nothing is here for tears ; nothing to wail,
Or knock the breast ; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.

This was the note that permeated the entire service, and expressed so truly in the prayer from the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom which followed the triumphant solemnity of the Dead March :—

"Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servant with Thy Saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

"Thou only art immortal, the Creator and Maker of man ; but we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return : for so didst Thou ordain when Thou createdst me, saying : 'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.'

"All we go down to the dust, And weeping o'er the grave we make our song.

"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

"Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servant with Thy Saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting."

Besides prayers from the Burial Service, there was a special petition that

laying aside our divisions, we may be united in one heart and mind to bear the burdens which this war has laid upon us. Help us to respond to the call of our country according to our several powers; put far from us selfish indifference to the needs of others; and give us grace to fulfil our daily duties with a sober diligence. Keep us from all uncharitableness in word or in deed; and enable us by patient continuance in well-doing to glorify Thy Name.

Afterwards, all sang together the happy marching hymn "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow," and "God Save the King."



CHAPTER XX.

SERVICE AT ST. PANCRAS.

In the chapel of the North Infirmary of the parish of St. Pancras, Dartmouth Park Hill—the institution in which Nurse Cavell served for two years as night superintendent, and where she is lovingly remembered—a memorial service, of which the order was precisely the same as that of the St. Paul's service, was conducted by the Rev. W. Davies, chaplain of the infirmary, and the Rev. E. L. Metcalfe, vicar of St. Pancras.

The service was of an intimate and personal character, as the congregation was composed chiefly of the nurses employed in the institution and those who came from the St. Pancras South, the Islington, and the Holborn Infirmaries, including prominent local public men such as Alderman Tapping and Councillor W. Flynn.

Miss Spittle, the matron, Miss Thorpe, the assistant-matron (both of whom were trained with Nurse Cavell in the London Hospital), Dr. Chilcott, the medical superintendent, Mr. Croger, the steward, also attended the service, and the relatives were represented by the Rev. J. Carter Rendell and Mrs. Rendell and Miss Sturt Cavell.



CHAPTER XXI.

THE EFFECT ON HISTORY.

The comment of the "Times" took the form of a scholarly indictment of German "Kultur," and the effect the reactive act is certain to produce. It said:—

"The ordinary German mind is doubtless incapable of understanding the 'horror and disgust' which the military execution of Miss Cavell will arouse throughout the civilised world. Here we have in its highest development that boasted product of the Teutonic intelligence and the Teutonic heart. The very spirit of Zabern, but of Zabern in war-time, broods over the whole brutal and stupid story. There is not in Europe, outside Germany and her Allies, a man who can read it without the deepest emotions of pity and of shame. The victim was a lady who had devoted her

life to the noblest and the most womanly work woman can do. She was the head of a great nursing institute which has trained numbers of nurses for Germany as well as for Belgium. She herself nursed many wounded Germans at the beginning of the war. She has been sentenced to death by their officers, and shot by their comrades. So is it that the Germans requite the charity of strangers. She had been guilty of a military offence—the offence of harbouring her own wounded countrymen and Belgians amongst whom she had lived and worked, and of getting them across the Dutch frontier. That was enough for the uniformed pedants who tried her, and for their civilian subordinates. She was perfectly straightforward and truthful with the Court. They sent her to her death upon her own admission. They could not, even by their own harsh law, have convicted her without these admissions. Her frankness did not profit her any more than did her sex, her calling, or her services to the Kaiser's wounded troops. There was the fact; she acknowledged certain acts which could be twisted into 'conveying soldiers to the enemy,' and the legal penalty for this offence under the German Military Code is death. That was enough for her Judges. They sentenced her on a Monday afternoon, and had her shot in the dark at 2 o'clock next morning. Napoleon ordered a similar 'execution' in the ditch of Vincennes. It cost him and his Empire dear.

"To the English Chaplain she admitted her guilt according to German military law, but assured him that 'she was happy to die for her country.' Her country with one voice acknowledges the claim. She did in very truth die for England, and England will not lightly forget her death. That she had committed a technical offence is undeniable, but so did Andreas Hofer, and other victims of Napoleonic tyranny whose doom patriotic Germans never cease to execrate. But

hers was a case, if ever there has been one, where the commonest sense of expediency demanded that mercy should temper justice. The action of the Emperor proves that he, at least, is sensible of this. We do not know whether the hide-bound brutality of the military authorities or the lying trickery of the civilians is the more repulsive. Both were determined that Miss Cavell should die, and they conspired together to shoot her before an appeal could be lodged. They have killed the English nurse, as Napoleon killed the Duc d'Enghien, and by killing her they have immeasurably deepened the stain of infamy that degrades them in the eyes of the whole world. They could have done no deed better calculated to serve the British cause.

THE LOYAL AMERICAN LEGATION.

The "Standard" is justly appreciative of the services of the American Legation, remarking:—

"Those who sorrow for the death of a good and brave Englishwoman who died for her country as truly and nobly as any soldier in the field, must most warmly acknowledge the efforts made on her behalf by the Ministers of the United States and of Spain. Everything which could be done by gentlemen of kindly spirit and resolution to save her was done. We are once more under a debt of unbounded gratitude to those neutrals who have, from the first, striven to maintain some of the mitigations of the horrors of warfare which our enemy thrusts aside with contempt. They strained their diplomatic prerogatives to the utmost in the cause of mercy, and, if all their efforts were unavailing to combat the logical savagery of the German military mind, the fault was none of theirs. We must add also that, despite the horror at the outrage which they cannot conceal, the representatives of the

United States who have reported are perfectly fair to the Germans. Although their own proposals for the defence of Miss Cavell were rejected, they do not deny that her trial was, in a sense, fair, and that the issue was in accordance with the evidence and the provisions of the German military code. The correspondence of Mr. Brand Whitlock with Mr. Page, and the documents he forwards, gain the greater cogency from their frank avowal of that fact. Murder by process of law is, of course, no rare thing. Judge Jeffreys was a murderer of that kind. But it has always aroused greater anger and contempt among men of right feeling than murder of any other kind, and those, we are sure, will be the feelings aroused throughout the world by the story of the murder of this noble woman, who, if she offended against the laws of her country's foes, could have been so easily rendered harmless by means far less severe. The vengeance of the strong upon the weak is the most abhorrent spectacle in the eyes of all right-minded people which can be exhibited.

It would be easy to pour forth vials of denunciation on the heads of the Germans for this act. But it is utterly useless to do so, and, if useless, then weak. A homely proverb says that you can expect nothing from a pig but a grunt, and we know by this time what to expect from our present enemy. Their standard of justice, of manliness, of chivalry, is altogether diverse from ours, and atrocities such as this done on Miss Cavell must simply confirm us in our determination that it is our standard, and not theirs, which is going to prevail in the world of the future. As one outrage follows another, the conviction grows the stronger that the world on the Prussian model would be an intolerable place, and that every man who loves freedom, mercy, and justice had better die than live to see it so. In due course, as we most fully believe, the blood of all those who have perished to slake the brutal German

thirst for dominion will be required at the hands of the guilty. On the other hand, the name of Edith Cavell is henceforth enshrined among the patriots and martyrs who have died nobly for the honour of the Empire. May her relatives and friends find comfort in that thought!"

GERMAN BLOOD-LUST.

Under the uncompromising title, "The Butchering of Miss Cavell," the "Daily Chronicle" remarks:—

"In a war which numbers its casualties by millions, and which has witnessed holocausts of atrocity like the sinking of the 'Lusitania' and the sack of Louvain, the murder of a single lady may seem a small episode. But the enormity of a crime is not always measured by the number of its victims. The story of the trial and execution of Miss Cavell is surely one of the most appalling wickednesses yet perpetrated in this war. We pity the man born of woman who can read them unmoved. Here was a lady of education who had devoted her life to the relief of human suffering. The head of a great nursing institute, she had helped to train hundreds of nurses, including Germans. When the war broke out she devoted her whole strength to the care of the wounded, and had lavished her personal attention on wounded German soldiers. Latterly she had assisted certain British, French, and Belgian soldiers to escape to England across the Dutch frontier. Charged with this military offence, she admitted it with complete candour; indeed, she seems to have been the principal witness against herself. One may safely affirm that, having regard to her transparently humanitarian motives and all the circumstances of the case, no Government in the world but the German would have inflicted the death penalty on such a culprit. They not merely inflicted it, but compassed its infliction

with a mixture of duplicity and brutality that must make every decent human being's gorge rise.

"The facts and papers speak for themselves. Comment is wasted on them. Only less amazing than the futile cruelty of the thing is the series of lies and subterfuges whereby it was sought to trick the American Legation and to secure that Miss Cavell should be dead before they could finally protest. Of Miss Cavell herself no one will dispute, that if any death in this war has been heroic, hers was; one cannot say less, and no one could say more. The sense of the whole civilised world can be left to judge between this helpless woman and her murderers. To the diplomatic representatives of the United States and Spain Sir Edward Grey has expressed his gratitude in terms which every countryman of Miss Cavell will most emphatically endorse. Yet these neutral diplomatists acted as they did, not in the cause of our nation, but in that of humanity. They sought in the interests of the German good name itself to save it from being branded with an indelible infamy. They failed utterly; and their failure affords one of the most eloquent proofs that the world has yet had of what German militarism, German duplicity, and German blood-lust really mean."

AN ENGLISH ANTIGONE.

This is the appropriate heading chosen by the "Morning Post" for its Editorial comment, wherein it is remarked: "Often, as in the course of the past fifteen months we have been astounded by the relapses into elemental barbarism which our adversaries have exhibited, perhaps there is no case that shows up so much as this—the ghastly descent of the German character into primitive brutality. When it is admitted that the charge was proved true, by the accused's confessions,

and that it was a charge that, according to the military code in force in Brussels, might be visited with the penalty of death, all is said that can be said for the real criminals. A proclamation of martial law usually invests the military authority with the power of inflicting the severest penalties over a wide range of offences. This does not mean that that authority is to deal in nothing but death sentences. Miss Cavell's offence consisted in harbouring certain English and Belgian soldiers and assisting them to escape across the frontier. Such acts, outcome of the impulses springing from the generous heart of a lonely woman, obviously brought no conceivable danger to the German authority in Brussels. On what ground could it be necessary, or even expedient, to punish them with death in the case of anyone, far less in the case of a woman, and a woman who was known to the German authorities to be solely occupied with works of charity, and to have tended their own wounded as freely as those of the Allies when they came within the range of her institute?

"But it is quite useless to look for any colourable pretext for German remorselessness in this matter, because the whole correspondence shows that they had no plea to offer. They were resolved from the first to commit this deed of cruelty, but they were feverishly anxious that it should be kept secret until beyond recall. From the moment that the American Legation was known to have got news of Miss Cavell's arrest and to be concerned in seeing that she was properly defended, the German local Government begins to adopt every means for throwing dust in the eyes of the United States representatives. Surely such a story has never been presented to the modern world as is here unfolded!

"All who have given any attention to Napoleonic literature must have recollections of prints of the death of the Duc d'Enghien—the firing party under the glare

of the torches, the prisoner standing on the brink of his newly-dug grave. In Napoleon's lifetime, and for many years after, nothing hurt his personal reputation more than this summary, furtive execution in the dead of night that seemed to proclaim its own blood-guiltiness. But the great Frenchman acted in this matter with the motives and in the manner of an Eastern Sultan. He saw a man whom, rightly or wrongly, he believed to be a danger to himself; he arrested him lawlessly on foreign soil and struck him down lawlessly. But what is there in common between such an episode and the midnight execution of a defenceless woman who never meant harm to any human being, who only came within reach of the criminal law by her superior regard for the higher precepts of mercy and compassion? When we think of the scene in that Brussels gaol we may well wonder that at this time of day it should be possible to get men to participate in such a deed. Is it that insufficient blood has been shed during this past year that men should hunger after one harmless life? Yet we should evidently make a great mistake to treat our heroic countrywoman's end as if a mere case for compassion. She did not bluster before her judges, but she did not bend. She appears to have confessed everything she had done with perfect calmness. The lawyer assigned for her defence appears to have been of a very doubtful character; but if he had been as able and fearless as Maître Labori it would not seem that he could have effected anything for such a client, who had reckoned the consequences of disobedience and preferred to disobey. One cannot mourn beyond a certain point for such a death. Who could have dreamed a few years ago that English womanhood would be producing such a heroine—the counterpart and realisation in actual life of the Antigone whom the tragedian's inspired imagination has held up to the world's admiration for so many centuries?

NO FOULER INFAMY,

is a phrase employed by the usually reticent "Daily Telegraph," which remarks: "We do not know whether any comment would be adequate in a case like this, or whether, indeed, all comment is not superfluous. . . . Nothing, probably, can now brand with fouler infamy the German name, stained as it is by all the damning items in its past record, from Louvain and the 'Lusitania' down to the murder of an English nurse. . . . Our enemy has incurred the disgust and loathing of all honourable and merciful men in Europe and America, and will have to pay hereafter to the utmost farthing the bitter reckoning."

"FOUL AND DAMNABLE,"

comments the "Daily Graphic." "The documents are a record of such foul and damnable infamy as all Germany's bloody crimes in this war cannot equal. . . . For this cold, calculated, deliberate murder of Miss Cavell in a Brussels prison-yard not Heaven itself nor all the mercy of all the angels could find a mediatory explanation."

"NOT DIED IN VAIN."

Already the Kaiser, anticipating the execration that will assuredly follow his latest and worst excess, has hastened to pardon the Comtesse de Belleville and Mme. Thulier, who were condemned for the same "crime" as Miss Cavell, says the "Daily Express." The bloodthirsty von Bissing has also been ordered to promise their lives to the British and French soldiers still hidden in Belgium if they promptly surrender. Nurse Cavell has died that they may live.

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